

Message Text

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62

ACTION EUR-25

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6637

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL MUNICH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PARIS 3274

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UR, FR

SUBJECT: INTERVIEW WITH SOLZHENITSYN'S FIRST WIFE

1. LE FIGARO RUNS EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW FEB. 5 OF SOLZHENITSYN'S FIRST WIFE, NATALIYA RESHETOVSKAYA, OBTAINED IN RYAZAN BY PAPER'S MOSCOW CORRESPONDENT ROBERT LACONTRE THROUGH ASSISTANCE OF NOVOSTI. WHILE SHE PORTRAYS HER EX-HUSBAND IN GENERALLY SYMPATHETIC TERMS, SHE CRITICIZES HIM FOR BEING DOGMATIC, SUBJECTIVE, MISTRUSTFUL AND A LONER. SHE CLAIMS THAT GULAG ARCHIPELAGO IS NOT A WORK OF SCIENTIFIC BUT OF ARTISTIC RESERACH, DRAWING ON /CAMP FOLKLORE" RATHER THAN FACT. SHE EXPLAINS HIS DECISION TO SEND HIS WORKS ABROAD BY A STUBBORN REFUSAL TO SUBMIT THEM TO EDITING. ACCORDING TO RESHETOVSKAYA, SHE IS WORKING ON HER MEMOIRS, IN WHICH SHE WILL TRY TO "UNCOVER SOLZHENITSYN'S PSYCHOLOGICAL SIDE."

2. IN AN ACCOMPANYING EDITORIAL NOTE, LE FIGARO ASSERTS THAT IN READING THE INTERVIEW, ONE WONDERS WHETHER BREZHNEV HAS NOT SUDDENLY DECIDED TO END THE POLEMIC SURROUNDING SOLZHENITSYN. IT GOES SO FAR AS TO CLAIM
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THAT JOURNALISTS OF NOVOSTI, WHO ARE HELPING RESHETOVSKAYA

WRITE HER BOOK, ARE LESS DOGMATIC AND AUSTERE THAN THEIR COLLEAGUES IN THE SOVIET PRESS. IT ADMITS HOWEVER THAT SOLZHENITSYN HIMSELF DOES NOT SEE ALL THIS IN THE SAME LIGHT. (TEXT OF INTERVIEW POUCHED TO INR.)

3. COMMENT: THE NORMALLY RESPONSIBLE LE FIGARO HAS CLEARLY GOVE OVERBOARD THIS TIME. FAR FROM MARKING AN END TO THE "PLEMIC," THE INTERVIEW IS SIMPLY A SOMEWHAT MORE SUBTLE VARIATION, DESIGNED TO RESPOND MORE EFFECTIVELY TO FRENCH SENSITIVITIES IN DISCREDITING SOLZHENITSYN. FACT THAT SOVIETS HAVE NOT NEGLECTED HEAVY-HANDED APPROACH, HOWEVER, IS SHOWN BY TENDENTIOUS ARTICLE IN LE MONDE FEB. 6 UNDER "INTERNATIONAL FORUM" RUBRIC. WRITTEN BY SOVIET POET, EUGENE DOLMATOVSKI, AND ENTITLED "SOLZHENITSYN, AN ENEMY OF PEACE," IT WAS ALSO SUPPLIED BY NOVOSTI.IRWIN

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